

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

CINCPAC

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 12257

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS

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SUBJ: COMMUNIST PRESS STILL PLAYING THE CIA THEME

REF: NEW DELHI 11635

SUMMARY: A SURVEY OF THE PRESS SINCE OUR LAST REPORT OF AUGUST 27 REVEALS THAT THE CPI IN PARTICULAR HAS NOT RELAXED ITS ANTI-US CAMPAIGN. THE ACCUSATION OF US RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BANGLADESH COUP IS STILL THE PRINCIPAL WEAPON WHICH THE COMMUNISTS ARE EMPLOYING. MOST OF THE ARTICLES MOVE QUICKLY FROM SEEING THE SINISTER HAND OF THE CIA IN BANGLADESH TO DISCERNING IT IN INDIA. THE CPI LINE IS THAT MRS GANDHI'S QUICK THINKING IN PROCLAIMING THE EMERGENCY SAVED INDIA FROM A SIMILAR FATE. THE BURDEN OF THIS ANTI-US ASSAULT HAS BEEN CARRIED BY THE LEFT WEEKLIES, WITH A FEW OF THE CONFIDENTIAL

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DAILIES REPORTING THE REMARKS OF OUR TRADITIONAL CRITICS SUCH AS KERALA CHIEF MINISTER C ACHUTA MENON, ANDHRA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER G VENGAL RAO AND OTHERS. THE MAJOR ENGLISH DAILIES HAVE GENERALLY NOT CARRIED REPORTS

OF THESE COMMUNIST ALLEGATIONS. THE AMBASSADOR HAS MADE AMPLY CLEAR TO THE GOI THE CONSEQUENCES TO US-INDIAN RELATIONS OF CRITICISM OF THE US. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE GOI IS NOW SEEKING BETTER RELATIONS. THE COMMUNISTS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THIS AND ARE RESPONDING WITH THEIR ANTI-US CAMPAIGN. FOR THE PRESENT WE THEREFORE INTEND TO LEAVE TO THE GOI THE PROBLEM OF THIS LEFTIST CAMPAIGN FROM BECOMING A BARRIER TO IMPROVED US-INDIA RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. ALTHOUGH THE BANGLADESH COUP IS NOW SEVERAL WEEKS OLD, THE PRO-COMMUNIST PRESS CONTINUES TO MAKE MUCH OF THE ACCUSATION THAT THE USG WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR IT. IN THE FOREFRONT OF THIS MUDSLINGING IS "BLITZ" WHOSE SEPT 7 EDITION HAS A COVER DEPICTING UNCLE SAM AS A SKELETON PUSHING THROUGH THE MAP OF BANGLADESH, WITH CIA INSCRIBED ON HIS HAT. THIS IS CAPTIONED, "SKELETON IN THE BANGLA CUPBOARD." IN A SEPARATE ARTICLE ENTITLED, "AMERICAN SHADOW: BANGLADESH SUBSTANCE" AND BEARING THE CAPTION, "THERE BUT FOR THE GRACE OF INDIRA GANDHI, MAY WE HAVE BEEN*.". BLITZ WARNS AGAINST US INFLUENCE AND THE CIA IN INDIA. "BLITZ" QUOTES MRS GANDHI'S INDEFINITE ANSWER ON "MEET THE PRESS" CONCERNING THE CIA IN INDIA: "SOMETIMES THERE ARE PRESENCES WHICH YOU CANNOT PROVE." THE ARTICLE GOES ON TO ATTACK THE ASIA FOUNDATION, THE PRESS INSTITUTE OF INDIA, AND THE LEADER GRANT PROGRAM. STILL ANOTHER ARTICLE ON THE EDITORIAL PAGE ENTITLED, "WESTERN PLOT TO EXPORT SUBVERSION TO INDIA THICKENS", CLAIMS THAT "BLINTA'SZ EARLIER REPORT OF A MASTERPLOT BY THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL, CIA AND ANTI-INDIA BODIES IN LONDON HAS BEEN CONFIRMED. THE "BLITZ" AUGUST 30 ISSUE IS ALSO REplete WITH THE SAME STUFF. ITS LEITMOTIV IS THAT MUJIB HAS SUFFERED THE SAME FATE AS ALLENDE.

2. THE AUGUST 31 EDITION OF THE CPI'S OFFICIAL WEEKLY, "NEW AGE", IS AN UNHAPPY BLEND OF ACCUSATIONS ABOUT CIA RESPONSIBILITY FOR BANGLADESH AND INVOLVEMENT IN INDIA. AGAIN THE PM'S REMARKS ON "MEET THE PRESS" ARE SINGLED OUT. CONFIDENTIAL

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THE AUGUST 31 AND AUGUST 24 ISSUES OF "NEW WAVE", ALSO A SPOKESMAN FOR THE CPI, ARE DEVOTED TO BANGLADESH AND THE CIA. FOR EXAMPLE, THE LEAD ARTICLE OF THE AUGUST 31 EDITION IS HEADLINED, "CIA'S DESPERATE EFFORTS TO REGAIN GROUND." AS IN THE OTHER LEFTIST WEEKLIES, THERE IS A NOT SO SUBLTE ATTEMPT TO LINK "DESTABILIZATION" ABROAD WITH EVENTS IN INDIA. "NEW WAVE" OF SEPT 7 FRONTPAGES AN ARTICLE ENTITLED, "PORTUGUESE SOCIALISTS ARE DANCING TO CIA TUNES." THE CIA AND BANGLADESH ARE REMEMBERED ON PAGE 11. THE AUGUST 31 ISSUE OF "LINK" AND THE AUGUST 30 ISSUE OF "MAINSTREAM" (A LIMITED CIRCULATION PRO-CPI WEEKLY) ALSO REPEATED THE ABOVE LINE. THE ADMK TAMIL DAILY "THENNAGOM" OF AUGUST 27 IN AN EDITORIAL ON THE LIMA CONFERENCE STATES THAT IT

STRONGY SUSPECTS THE CIA'S HAND IN THE DEATH OF MUJIB. ON THE EVE OF A CPI-FRONT ANDHRA PRADESH YOUTH CONFERENCE IN HYDERABAD, SEPT 3-5, A CPI TELUGU DAILY CLAIMED THAT EVENTS IN BANGLADESH, WHICH WERE "PART OF AMERICAN IMPERIALIST STRATEGY OF DESTABILIZATION IN THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT," HAVE MADE INDIAN YOUTH MORE AWARE OF THE DANGERS OF CIA AT HOME AND OF THE TIMELINESS OF THE DECLARATION OF THE EMERGENCY.

3. THE CPI HINDI DAILY, "JANYUG", SEPT 1, REPORTED THAT THE ANDHRA PRADESH STATE LABOR MINISTER, T. ANJAYAH, PRESIDED OVER AN ANTI-FASCIST CONFERENCE AT HYDERABAD, AUGUST 30-31. TWO PAPERS WERE READ AT THE CONFERENCE: ONE ON THE 20-POINT PROGRAM AND THE OTHER ON CIA ACTIVITIES IN ASIA AND ELSEWHERE. THE UNION MINISTER OF STATE FOR PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS, K R GHANESH, IS SAID TO HAVE STRONGLY CRITICIZED THE "AMERICAN POLICY OF OVERTHROWING GOVERNMENTS" AND TO HAVE CITED THE EXAMPLES OF IRAN, GHANA, BANGLADESH AND PERU. ANDHRA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER G. VENGAL RAO REPORTEDLY LAMENTED THE MURDER OF MUJIB AS "INDICATIVE OF HOW CRUEL FASCISM AND IMPERIALISM COULD BE ..."

4. KERALA CHIEF MINISTER C ACHUTA MENON (CPI) TOLD A PUBLIC MEETING ON AUGUST 31 THAT THE GOI PREVENTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A RIGHT REACTIONARY REGIME IN INDIA SUBSERVIENT TO THE USG. THE CPI'S DAILY "PATRIOT" OF SEPT 5 REPORTED A PRESS CONFERENCE OF CPI GENERAL SECRETARY RAJESWARA RAO AT LUCKNOW IN WHICH HE PULLED OUT MOST OF THE KNOWN ANTI-US CONFIDENTIAL

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STOPS.

5. THE CPI-S "JANYUG" SEP 4 REPORTED THE REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONGRESS YOUTH, PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI, A CONGRESS MP, AT RECENT CELEBRATIONS OF "INDO-SOVIET FRIENDSHIP WEEK": "MR DAS MUNSI DISCLOSED THAT SIX MONTHS AGO SIX TOP CIA OFFICIALS, ALL OF WHOM WERE MILITARY EXPERTS, TOURED INDIA. TWO OF THEM ALSO WENT TO BANGLADESH. HE SAID THAT THEIR ACTIVITIES HAD SOME BEARING OR OTHER ON THE EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE IN BANGLADESH."

6. THE DELHI PRESS SEPT 4 REPORTED A STATEMENT OF THE CPM'S POLITBURO ACCUSING THE CIA OF COMPLICITY IN THE BANGLADESH COUP.

7. COMMENT: THE ONLY DISCERNIBLE SHIFT SINCE OUR LAST REPORT (REFTEL) IN THE ANTI-US CAMPAIGN OF THE CPI IS THAT IT IS NOW MAINLY CENTERED IN THE WEEKLIES. THE DAILIES LIMIT THEMSELVES TO SUCH NEWSWORTHY ITEMS AS THE REMARKS OF RAJESHWARA RAO, VENGAL RAO, AND C ACHUTA MENON. THIS MESSAGE REPORTS ONLY PRESS COVERAGE BY THOSE PAPERS WHICH HAVE PRINTED CRITICISM OF THE US. A GENERAL REVIEW OF

THE PRESS INDICATES THAT OVERALL THERE IS LITTLE REPORTING OF ANTI-US ALLEGATIONS, CERTAINLY MUCH LESS THAN PRIOR TO THE IMPOSITION OF CENSORSHIP. THE AMBASSADOR HAS MADE AMPLY CLEAR TO THE GOI AT HIGH LEVELS WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES FOR US-INDIA RELATIONS OF CRITICISM OF THE US COULD BE AND HE HAS CALLED TO THE ATTENTION OF THE FOREIGN SECRETARY THE MATTER OF PUBLICATION IN THE CENSORED PRESS OF ATTACKS ON THE US. OUR POINT HAS BEEN AMPLY MADE AND WE DO NOT INTEND TO RAISE THE ISSUE ANEW. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE GOI IS SEEKING BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE US. THE COMMUNISTS ARE OBVIOUSLY WORRIED ABOUT THIS AND ARE RESPONDING WITH ATTACKS ON THE US. WE BELIEVE THAT UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES FOR THE PRESENT IT IS BEST TO LEAVE TO THE GOI THE PROBLEM OF PREVENTING THIS LEFTIST CAMPAIGN FROM BECOMING A BARRIER TO IMPROVED RELATIONS.

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